

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-11

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

S E C R E T STATE 147350

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, NP

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH B.P. KOIRALA

1. B.P. KOIRALA MET PRIVATELY WITH AMBASSADOR BUNKER, BRIEFLY WITH ASSISTANT SECRETARY DERIAN, AND THEN TALKED WITH WORKING-LEVEL OFFICERS FROM HA AND NEA/INS (GRAHAME, JONES, PERCIVAL) MORNING OF JUNE 8. AFL-CIO AT HIGH LEVEL AND INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS SOUGHT SPECIFICALLY TO ARRANGE APPOINTMENT WITH ASSISTANT SECRETARY DERIAN.

2. AMBASSADOR BUNKER RECEIVED MR. KOIRALA STRICTLY AS A PERSONAL ACQUAINTANCE. ASSISTANT SECRETARY DERIAN MET MR. KOIRALA FOR A VERY FEW MINUTES AND AVOIDED DISCUSSING NEPALESE POLITICS. WORKING-LEVEL MEETING WAS LOW-KEY. MR. KOIRALA'S VOICE IS WEAK, BUT HE NOW FEELS FINE. ALTHOUGH HE SUSPECTS THAT HE MAY HAVE TO RETURN TO THE U.S. NEXT
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YEAR FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT, HE PLANS TO RETURN TO KATHMANDU WITHIN A MONTH.

3. MR. KOIRALA ARGUES THAT THE MONARCHY AND DEMOCRACY ARE COMPATABLE AND BELIEVES THAT THE KING OF NEPAL IS INCLINED TO LIBERALIZE THE NEPALESE POLITICAL SYSTEM, BUT IS SHACKLED BY "VESTED INTERESTS" IN THE PALACE. HE IS UN-

CERTAIN ABOUT THE GON'S INTENTIONS WHEN HE RETURNS TO NEPAL, SUGGESTING BOTH THAT HE WOULD AGAIN BE DETAINED ON ARRIVING IN KATHMANDU AND THAT THE GON WOULD FINALLY ACKNOWLEDGE THAT HE HAS BEEN ACQUITTED ON ALL THE TREASON AND SEDITION CHARGES. ACCORDING TO KOIRALA THE SUPERIOR COURT MUST DECIDE TO CONFIRM THESE ACQUITTALS OR REOPEN CASE FOR FURTHER HEARINGS WITHIN 100 DAYS OF LOWER COURT VERDICT. THE 100 DAYS WILL BE UP PRIOR TO KOIRALA'S ARRIVAL IN KATHMANDU. NONETHELESS, HE FEARS THAT HE MAY BE DETAINED PENDING A FINAL RULING ON THE TWO CHARGES WHICH WERE INDEFINITELY POSTPONED FOR LACK OF EVIDENCE. HE SUSPECTS THAT THE NEPALESE GOVERNMENT IS "OF A MIND" TO ASSURE HIS FINAL ACQUITTAL, BUT BELIEVES THAT THE AUTHORITIES HAVE NOW PLACED THEMSELVES IN A "QUANDRY".

4. B.P. KOIRALA'S READING OF THE NEPALESE POLITICAL SCENE IS BASED UPON HIS PERCEPTION OF THE KING'S POLITICAL INSTINCTS. HE SAID THAT THE KING WAS A "WELL-MEANING PERSON, WHO WOULD LIKE TO FIND A WAY" TO OPEN A DIALOGUE WITH THE DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION. MR. KOIRALA ASSERTED THAT IF HE MET THE KING PRIVATELY, HE MIGHT BE ABLE TO CONVINCE HIM TO "DISMANTLE THE PANCHAYAT SYSTEM".

5. ONE HUNDRED "POLITICAL" PRISONERS, IN MR. KOIRALA'S OPINION, CONTINUE TO BE DETAINED BY THE GON. OF PARTICULAR CONCERN IS THE CONTINUING DETENTION OF GANESH MAN
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SINGH, DESPITE HIS ACQUITTAL IN LOWER COURT, PENDING THE CONFIRMATION BY A HIGHER COURT OF THESE ACQUITTALS.

6. WITH REGARD TO THE U.S. ROLE, MR. KOIRALA STATED THAT THE U.S. WAS THE "MOST INFLUENTIAL" COUNTRY IN NEPAL. WHILE DISAVOWING ANY CONCERN FOR HIS PERSON, HE PLEADED FOR U.S. INTERVENTION WITH THE KING TO SUPPORT THE "DEMOCRATIC FORCES" IN NEPAL. IN HIS OPINION, THERE IS NOW A DELICATE BALANCE BETWEEN THE FORCES OF REACTION AND PROGRESS IN HIS COUNTRY. HE SUGGESTED THAT HE WAS REACTING TO THIS SITUATION BY CREATING A FOREIGN CONSTITUENCY - WHICH WOULD EXERCISE A "BENIGN" INFLUENCE, BUT NOT APPEAR TO PLACE FOREIGN "PRESSURE" ON THE GON. MR. KOIRALA SAID THAT HE DOES NOT WISH TO BECOME INVOLVED IN A PUBLIC CONFRONTATION WITH THE MONARCHY. PUBLICITY AND PRESSURE WOULD ALARM THE PALACE AND THEREFORE PROVE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE.

7. WE HAD PREVIOUSLY INFORMED NEPALESE EMBASSY THAT WE WOULD AGREE TO A WORKING-LEVEL MEETING IF MR. KOIRALA SO REQUESTED. WE PROMPTLY INFORMED THE NEPALESE EMBASSY OF OUR JUNE 8 CONVERSATIONS WITH MR. KOIRALA.

WITHOUT BEING SPECIFIC, WE TOLD THE EMBASSY THAT WE LISTENED TO MR. KOIRALA'S VIEWS ON THE SITUATION IN NEPAL AND THAT THE GIST OF OUR TALKS WITH KOIRALA CONCERNED HIS HEALTH AND TRAVEL PLANS AS WELL AS THE MECHANICS OF THE NEPALESE JUDICIAL SYSTEM. WE ALSO ASSURED THE EMBASSY THAT AMBASSADOR BUNKER MET WITH MR. KOIRALA ON STRICTLY A PERSONAL AND PRIVATE BASIS. NONETHELESS, THE EMBASSY HAS INFORMED THE DESK OFFICER BY PHONE THAT IT CONSIDERS KOIRALA'S RECEPTION AT THE DEPARTMENT TO BE AN "UNFRIENDLY ACT".

8. IF ASKED BY THE PRESS, WE INTEND TO SAY THAT MR. KOIRALA MET WITH DEPARTMENT OFFICERS AT THE WORKING LEVEL WHO ARE CONCERNED WITH SOUTH ASIA AND HUMAN RIGHTS MATTERS. AMB-SECRET

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ASSADOR BUNKER ALSO AGREED TO A PERSONAL AND PRIVATE MEETING WITH MR. KOIRALA, WHOM HE HAD KNOWN WHEN HE WAS AMBASSADOR TO NEPAL.

9. DEPARTMENT SUGGESTS THAT EMBASSY TAKE THE INITIATIVE TO INFORM THE GON IN GENERAL TERMS OF MEETINGS IN THE DEPARTMENT. VANCE

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